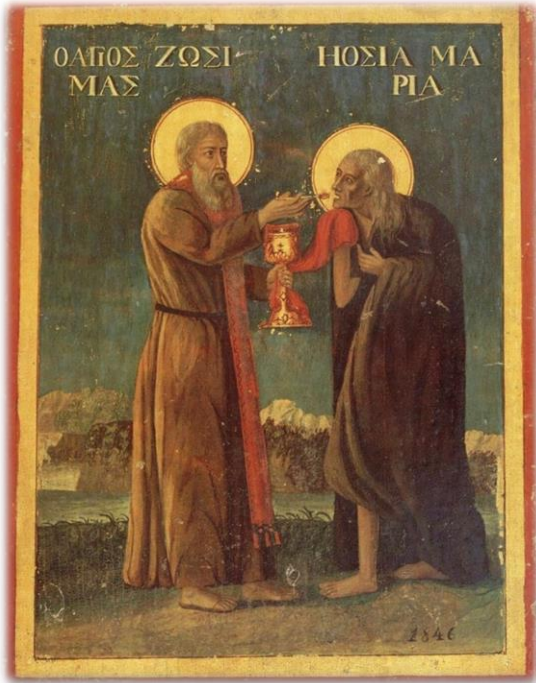


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



St. Mary of Egypt

5th Sunday of Great Lent

April 21st, 2024

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749
www.holycrosswilliamsport.org

Very Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor/Rector
Office: 570.322.3020
(c) 717.576.3503
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Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Galatians 3:23-29; Hebrews 9:11-14
Gospel: St. Luke 7:36-50; Mark 10:32-45

***A very warm welcome to everyone, and especially to our visitors
this morning! Please join us for some fellowship after in the
Parish Hall!***

Services, Events & Announcements

- + Church **open** for prayer/Confession – Tues April 23rd - 7-9:30am
- + Panikhida (Michael Stefanick) – Weds April 24th at 4:45
- + **Presanctified Liturgy** – Weds April 24th – **Ninth Hour & Liturgy** at 5:20) - *Lenten potluck* fellowship following in the Hall.
- + Church **open** for prayer/Confession – Thurs April 25th - 7–9:30am
- + **Lazarus Saturday Matins** – Fri April 26th at 5:30
- + **Lazarus Saturday Hours and Divine Liturgy** – Sat April 27th at 9
- + Sat April 27th – **Choir Practice** at 4
- + Sat April 27th - **Great Vespers** w/*Blessing of Palms* at 5
- + **Palm Sunday** - April 28th – **Hours, Divine Liturgy & Procession** at 9:40
– *Lenten fellowship* following in the Hall.
- + *Fr Seraphim is available for Confession before Services or see him for an appointment.*

Our Giving – April 14th, 2024

Tithes/Offerings - \$1,537.00 / Online Giving - \$380.00
Candle Offerings – \$73.00 / Memorial - \$500.00 / Benevolence - \$250.00

Thank you all for your generosity!

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by **fasting, prayer [i.e., Prayers Before Communion], recent confession**, and who were *at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. *We should all be at peace with everyone too.* If you have any questions about Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

The Power of Humility, by Fr. Steven Kostoff

The pride and self-righteousness of the pharisee—he who “exalts himself”—is rather starkly contrasted with the humility and repentance—he who “humbles himself”—of the publican. From these two examples of a revealed interior disposition, it is only the publican who is “justified,” according to Christ. With a kind of “folk wisdom” that would have resonated for his rural flock in early 20th century Serbia, Bishop Nikolai Velimirovic recasts the parable in an earthy story form that seeks to reinforce Christ’s teaching.

“A man went into the forest to choose a tree from which to make roof-beams,” he writes. “And he saw two trees, one beside the other. One was smooth and tall, but had rotted away inside, and the other was rough on the outside and ugly, but its core was healthy. The man sighed, and said to himself: ‘What use is this smooth, tall tree to me if it is rotten inside and useless for beams? The other one, even if it is rough and ugly, is at least healthy on the inside and so, if I put a bit more effort into it, I can use it for roof-beams for my house.’ And, without thinking any more about it, he chose that tree.”

Just to be certain, Bishop Nikolai drives home the moral point in the following conclusion: “So will God choose between two men for His house, and will choose, not the one who appears outwardly righteous, but the one whose heart is filled with God’s healthy righteousness.”

The pharisee acted according to the Law, keeping himself externally free from sin, fasting twice a week and paying a tithe on all that he had. It would be wonderful if members of the Church lived and acted like that with such consistency! However, it is the interior orientation of the heart that Christ is most concerned with—and it is herein that the pharisee twisted righteousness into self-righteousness, which is basically a form of idolatry, or worship of the “self.” Do any of us escape that self-deceptive trap? If not, then better to admit it, as Saint John Chrysostom reminds us, for “it is evil to sin, though help can be given; but to sin, and not to admit it—there is no help here.”

As Saint Isaac the Syrian writes, “Until a human person achieves humility, he will receive no reward for his works. The reward is given not for our works but for our humility.” And, to quote Saint Macarius the Great, “A humble person never falls. Being already lower than any, where can he fall? Vanity is a great humiliation, but humility is a great exalting, honor and dignity.”

(www.oca.org/reflections/fr.-steven-kostoff/the-power-of-humility)

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Archpriest Michael (Evans), Archpriest Antony (Hughes), Archpriest Gregory (White), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Mat. Mary Lynn (Henry), Anastasia Linnehan & Sarah Gunter (children to be born of them), Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, James Larson, Mary Lamprinos, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Sebastian Fillar, Isaac Bannister, Christine Perrin, Elizabeth Yonkin, Michael Lazorchak, Brian Gunter, Vladimir Kerkendall, Alec Litchard, Zina Dimirkow, Patricia Brown, Infant Theodore Linnehan, Our Catechumens: Garrett Payer & Shyanne Vance & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Archpriest Anthony Karbo +3/19, Archpriest Herman Schick +3/17, Madeline Minarich +3/22, Edward Hojnicky +4/4, Lazarus Lopez & those who have lost their lives in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East